

Appln No. 09/845,754
Amdt date June 2, 2006
Reply to Office action of February 27, 2006

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for providing inventory control of medical objects, said apparatus comprising:

 a scanner for scanning each of said medical objects before and after a surgical procedure and generating a signal each time one of said medical objects is scanned, the scanner generating data as to a type of medical object to be used for identifying the medical object later, said data being included in said signal;

 a container adapted for storing said medical objects after use, said container having an opening for receiving said medical objects and at least one sensor for sensing said medical objects upon insertion into said container, said at least one sensor being removably coupled to said opening;

 a counter for receiving said signal from said scanner and determining a first count of said medical objects before said surgical procedure and a second count of said medical objects after said surgical procedure; and

 a reconciling device for receiving said first count of said medical objects and second count of said medical objects from said counter and for comparing said first count and said second count to determine if said first count equal said second count and if the first count and second count are not equal, the reconciling device determining and identifying a type of medical object which is missing based on a difference between the first and second counts and based on the data as to the type of medical object, which data is included in said signal.

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2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said scanner includes a reader for reading identification data contained on said medical objects.
3. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising an identification device for receiving said identification data from said scanner and for identifying an object type of each of said medical objects scanned by said scanner, said reconciling device receiving said identification data from said identification device and matching identification data received during said first and second counts of said medical objects to identify a type of one of said medical objects that was identified during said first count but was not identified during said second count.
4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said counter and said reconciling device comprise a computer system including a memory for storing said first and second counts.
5. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said counter and said reconciling device comprise a computer system including a memory for storing said first and second counts of said medical objects.
6. (Canceled.)
7. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said container further comprises an internal counter connected to said sensor for counting said medical objects received in said container.

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8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said internal counter is connected to said counter for transmitting count information to said counter.

9. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said container includes an alarm mechanism connected to said at least one sensor for indicating when said at least one sensor senses one of said medical objects.

10. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said container comprises a disposable jar for storing sharp objects including needles and scalpel blades and a light emitting diode display for providing a visual count of said medical objects.

11-20 (Canceled)